30 Days of Summer by benjaminrussell

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Summary:

30 days of summer writing challenge, various pairings and fandoms.

Most recent chapters:
26. Power outage - Cougar/Jensen, The Losers
27. Baseball - Eliot/Parker/Hardison, Leverage
28. Heat - Tommy & Billy, Young Avengers
29. Popsicle - Lance/Keith, Voltron: Legendary Defender
30. Bugs - Nancy/Jonathan/Steve, Stranger Things
Full list in the chapter titles.

1. Fireworks - Ronan/Adam, The Raven Cycle

Summary for the Chapter:

> When Gods and Kings Collide AU.
> Adam is used to his birthday being overshadowed by the Fourth of July.

Notes for the Chapter:

> Thanks to Allarica for both the present ideas and the inspiration to write more for this AU. <3

Adam was used to his birthday being overshadowed by Independence Day, and if he was being honest, he wasn't actually bothered that much by it. It wasn't like he'd ever expected people to remember his birthday, not before being befriended by Gansey at least, so when Ronan had turned up at the door to the Hephaestus cabin, an extravagantly wrapped parcel in his hands, Adam had been pleasantly surprised. Upon expressing his thoughts, "You remembered my birthday," and "You didn't have to get me anything," Ronan had immediately rolled his eyes and said drily, "Well I'd be a pretty shitty boyfriend if I didn't get you a birthday present." Which coming from Ronan was almost romantic, however in true Ronan style, he then followed it up with an impatient, "Hurry up and open your present, Parrish." When Adam had carefully opened the wrapping paper, he'd found a posh looking fountain pen with his initials engraved on the lid in what was clearly Ronan's handwriting. He thought it must have come from the other boy's dreams, and when he'd looked back up at his boyfriend with a pleased smile on his face, Ronan had confirmed it.

"It'll never run out of ink. I figured it'd be useful for when you go to college."

(There'd also been a second present later on in the day, but that was definitely staying at the bottom of Adam's drawer where no-one else would ever see it. The ideas he'd already had about using the toy though, those he might share with Ronan one day.)

Now though, he was back in familiar territory. All of the campers were gathered on the beach, waiting for the firework display to start, while the smell of the barbeque drifted over to mix with the salt of the ocean breeze. Adam had helped his siblings build the many fireworks that would make up the display, but he'd let Jake and Nyssa take charge of the execution, preferring to just sit and watch with his friends. Ronan was laid with his head in Adam's lap, eyes closed against the last of the sunlight as he messed with the leather bands on his wrist, while to his left were sat Gansey, Blue and Noah. The former was studying his ever present journal, while the latter two were decorating a sand castle they'd built, with twigs, shells, and bits of thread from Blue's dress. Confident that no-one was watching him, Adam allowed himself a small smile, enjoying the rare chance to just relax in the sunshine.

A sudden cheer from the edge of the water signalled the fireworks were about to begin, so Adam leant back on his elbows and looked skyward, a wash of pride filling him when the first one exploded above them. Nowhere else would a handful of teenagers (and a couple of children) be able to put on such a spectacular firework display, so Adam made a mental note to make sure all of his siblings knew what a good job they'd done, especially the younger ones. Although encouraging Harley's love of explosives possibly wasn't the best idea, he admitted to himself. Noah's cry of delight brought him back to the present however, so he attempted to push all other thoughts but those of the present to the back of his mind for the time being.

The memory of that Fourth of July would stay with him for a long time – the last time the five of them got to just enjoy each other's company before the series of events that started with the appearance of the Grey Man and ended with Gansey's temporary death, the conclusion of their years long search, and Noah's disappearance.

2. Sunburn - Keith/Lance, Voltron: Legendary Defender

Summary for the Chapter:

Keith gets burnt while carrying out repairs on Red. Lance's reaction isn't what he'd expected.

The first thing Keith heard when he set foot into the castle kitchen after a day working on Red out on the planet's surface, was a disbelieving, "You're almost the same colour as your lion!" The exclamation was soon followed by Lance's distinctive laughter, the other paladin clearly finding Keith's sunburn a lot funnier than Keith himself was.

"Good for him," Keith thought darkly as he tried to resist the urge to reach up and scratch his neck, instead diverting his discomfort into scowling at Lance, who was now leant against the counter whilst clutching his stomach. Surely sunburn wasn't that funny? But then again, it was Lance, and who knew what went on in his head.

"You lived in the desert for like year, dude! How did you get so badly burned from one afternoon in the sun?" Lance managed to get his laughter under control enough to speak again, goggling at Keith like he was a particularly unusual specimen in a zoo. Keith muttered a response as he pushed past Lance to get to the replicator, swiping a glass from the cupboard and holding it under the tap, intent on getting his drink and getting out of there.

"I'm sorry, I didn't quite catch that, Keithy-boy," Lance said, grinning widely. Keith swore that the other boy had a sixth sense for anything that embarrassed Keith, somehow always being drawn to any awkward situation or knowing exactly what to say for maximum embarrassment.

"I said, I don't have any sunscreen here," Keith growled, gesturing wildly with his glass of bright orange liquid, but of course his tone didn't do anything to dissuade Lance who just burst out laughing again at Keith's words.

"The mighty Keith Kogane defeated by something as simple as the

lack of a drug store!" Keith just glared at him in response, before turning on his heel and stalking out the kitchen, Lance's cackling following him down the hallway until he turned a corner and got out of earshot.

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An hour or so later, there was a knock on Keith's door. Sighing, he put down his book and got up to answer it, padding across the room quietly on his bare feet. Upon opening the door, he immediately went to slam it shut again once he saw who was outside. He was not in the mood for more teasing. Unfortunately Lance got his foot in before it closed, forcing Keith to either see what Lance wanted or to break his foot, and despite the impression he sometimes gave, he didn't actually want to see his fellow paladin hurt.

"What?" He demanded, stepping back just enough to let the door swing open. Surprisingly, Lance looked a lot less amused than he had done earlier and in fact if he didn't know any better, Keith would almost say the blue paladin looked nervous. Lance held out a small bottle, "It'll help your sunburn. My sister used to get it bad because she never remembered to put sunscreen on after swimming, so I got into the habit of having aloe gel in my bag." He pushed his other hand through his hair, looking a lot more uncomfortable than Keith had ever seen him before. Belatedly, Keith realised that Lance must be worried that Keith would laugh in his face or reject him, and the knowledge sent an unexpected surge of affection through him.

"Oh er, thanks," Keith stuttered, giving Lance a small smile to show that the gesture was appreciated. Now confident his action was no longer in danger of getting him a door to the face, Lance's usual exuberance returned and he pushed his way into the room, seemingly looking around for something. Eventually his gaze settled on the bed and he gestured for Keith to sit.

"Come on, sit down. I'll help you apply it to your back." His tone left no room for argument, so Keith found himself being swept along, crossing his legs as he perched on the end of his bed. A scraping noise told him that Lance was pulling up the desk chair, then there was a pause, a squelching noise, and then a sudden cold touch on the back of his neck. He hissed in a breath, but didn't say anything, afraid to

break the tentative peace that had appeared between the two of them.

“I’m sure between them, Allura and Pidge will be able to get some sunscreen, or at least make some weird alien substitute,” Lance commented as he gently rubbed gel into Keith’s shoulders. Keith hummed in agreement, strangely relaxed by the other boy’s touch, but still unwilling to speak in case he said the wrong thing.

A few minutes later, Lance’s hands stilled.

“There. Put some on the rest of your burn, and then just reapply whenever it starts feeling tight or itchy again.” Keith turned to face him, stilling when he spotted the pink tinge of Lance’s cheeks. Apparently he wasn’t the only one affected by the affectionate gesture.

He wasn’t sure who leant in first, but the next second they were kissing, soft and shy, and not at all what Keith had thought it would be like. They were both smiling when they finally separated.

3. Swimming - Sherman/Malcolm, PJO

Summary for the Chapter:

> Sherman wins a race and teases his boyfriend.

Notes for the Chapter:

> Especially for Allarica, the Malcolm to my Sherman, and one of probably only 3 or 4 people who ship this pairing.

Sherman stumbled out of the lake with his fists raised in celebration, and shot a triumphant smirk at where Holly Victor stood with a stop watch. Laurel hit the shore just after him, but she was wearing a deep scowl, unused to losing. He and Laurel were pretty evenly matched when it came to swimming, but in the end, Sherman's strength had won out over Laurel's competitiveness and he'd narrowly managed to snatch victory. Shaking himself, he pushed his wet hair out of his face and looked around for Malcolm. Upon spotting his boyfriend sat in the shade of a tree a short way away, a thick textbook open on his lap, Sherman made his way over, leaving a trail of damp footsteps in his wake. The radiant smile on Malcolm's face, when he looked up and noticed Sherman, was well worth the potential danger of beating the Nike twins in a competition.

"I take it you won then?" Malcolm asked as Sherman flopped down next to him, careful not to get water on the other boy's book.

"Yep. Another point for cabin five," Sherman grinned. As part of the summer's activities, Chiron had declared they were going to have an ongoing competition between the cabins. There would be different challenges, ranging from a scavenger hunt, to fighting with a variety of weaponry, to crafting. Today's event had been swimming, and it had quickly come down to a very close race between Sherman and Laurel, the daughter of Nike just edging out her twin, much to Holly's chagrin. Thankfully Percy Jackson wasn't at camp otherwise no-one would have stood a chance of beating him.

"Do I get a victory kiss?" Sherman joked, tilting his head sideways to

get a better look at his boyfriend. Malcolm's cheeks were tinged pink, and Sherman suddenly realised that the son of Athena was probably reacting to the fact that he was wearing nothing but swim shorts and a scattering of water droplets. Unafraid to exploit the situation, Sherman leaned in and kissed Malcolm deeply, languidly, only pulling back when Malcolm's hand curled around his bicep. With a rather devious smile, he looked Malcolm directly in the eye and suggested, "How about we go back to your cabin and celebrate?" The resulting blush on his boyfriend's face, despite his obvious enthusiasm for the idea, was adorable.

4. Camping - Erin/Holtz, Ghostbusters

Summary for the Chapter:

> A call sends the team upstate to investigate a haunted cabin in the woods.

They'd set up the tents a short way from the ranger's cabin, far enough into the forest that they weren't immediately obvious to anyone or anything inside, but close enough that their equipment would still pick up anything that happened. Erin and Holtzmann were camped just back from the track that led to the cabin, while Patty and Abby were on the other side of the clearing, covering the back door. It wasn't the first call that had taken them out of the city, but it was still unusual enough that the trip upstate felt almost like a holiday. A much weirder vacation than Erin had ever taken with her parents, admittedly, but there was a lighthearted quality to the atmosphere that wasn't normally present on a job, especially with Holtzmann singing as she unpacked their equipment, tapping out the beat on whatever was in reach including Erin herself. Erin vaguely recognised the song, taking a second or two to place it as 'Everywhere' by Fleetwood Mac.

"Is that the last of it?" She asked as she helped Holtz carry an unknown box from the ranger's truck into their tent.

"That's ten points to the pretty lady at the front," Holtz replied in her best game show host voice, grinning at Erin before diving into one of the bags lined up by the tent. Erin smiled and turned towards the park ranger who'd driven them out there, a young man with one hand resting on his gun as if he expected to be attacked any second.

"You can go now, thank you," She informed him, noting the relief that was immediately evident in his expression.

"Right you are, ma'am. I can't say I envy you being out here all night, but at least the ghost has scared away all the wildlife." *Great.* Now all Erin could think about was a bear attacking them as well as whatever spirit had taken up residence in the cabin. Maybe even a ghost bear? Was that possible? Did animals ever become ghosts?

“I like the sound of ma’am,” Holtz’ voice interrupted her from the spiralling thoughts as the truck sped off down the track.

“It’s nice to deal with someone who actually respects us,” Erin agreed, about to elaborate on the refreshing treatment when she noticed Holtz’ expression. It was the look that she got when Erin did something she found amusing, and sure enough, she followed it up with a smirk and, “I was thinking more along the lines of calling you ma’am in bed.” Holtz winked, and Erin flushed, but before she could response there was a big crash from the cabin, sending both women scrabbling for their proton packs.

It was definitely a conversation to revisit later though.

Notes for the Chapter:

> For those that don’t know it, ‘Everywhere’ is a song about new love. Holtz picked it purposefully. ;)

5. Barbecue - Gansey & Co, The Raven Cycle

Summary for the Chapter:

Gansey contemplates summertime and friendship.

Notes for the Chapter:

Set after The Raven King.

This is how normal teenagers spend their holidays.

The thought occurred to Gansey as he stood in the kitchen doorway, taking a moment to just watch his friends enjoying themselves before he rejoined them with the drinks he'd gone to fetch. It still seemed strange that they could spend a day like this, relaxing and having fun with no commitments or deadlines hanging over them. There was no homework to be completed because school was over and done with, no excursions to Cabeswater or the ley line to be undertaken because the hunt for Glendower was over and done with, no looming threat of Adam having to leave for work because his jobs in Henrietta were over and done with. Gansey watched Adam and Ronan bickering over how many coals to put on the barbecue for a moment, before turning his gaze to where Blue and Henry were sat hunched over a map together. The picture wasn't quite complete though. There was something missing, or rather some*one*. Although he knew it wouldn't make a difference; it hadn't the first hundred times he'd wished it, he couldn't stop himself thinking.

I wish Noah were still here.

Before he had much chance to contemplate that thought however, Henry looked up and spotted him.

"Gansey boy! What do you think about Norway?" He asked excitedly, beckoning Gansey over and almost hitting Blue in the head with the wild gesture.

"The town or the country?" Gansey queried, balancing the three cans of drink in one hand as he moved an old pair of boots out of the way

so he could sit down next to Blue. They were both the left shoe. One had an unearthly looking flower growing out of it.

“The country,” Blue clarified, shooting him a thankful smile as he passed her a can, “Henry has decided he wants to become a Viking.”

“That’s just a cover to preserve my fragile masculinity,” Henry informed Gansey in a stage whisper, “I actually want to see some glaciers. I heard they’re spectacular.” As he listened to Blue and Henry debate the practicalities of visiting Norway on their road trip, he had another profound realisation.

This is what home feels like.

6. Road Trips - Henry/Blue/Gansey, The Raven Cycle

Summary for the Chapter:

> Henry, Blue and Gansey set off on their road trip, and Blue and Gansey make a discovery.

Notes for the Chapter:

> I started this yesterday but didn't get very far, so here it is today instead. I wrote something both days, so I figure that's the important part.

It was a warm Saturday morning when Gansey, Blue and Henry left for their road trip. Adam was starting college on Monday, and he and Ronan were going to spend the weekend up there getting him settled in, so the trio had decided to leave Henrietta at the same time. After saying their goodbyes to the other two, and promising to send them regular postcards and texts, Gansey put the car into gear and pulled out of the Monmouth parking lot. Blue and Henry immediately started arguing good-naturedly over music choices, Henry leaning forwards from the back seat in order to better punctuate his arguments with big hand gestures. In the end, Blue won due to the simple fact that she was sat in the front in easy reach of the stereo, but as far as Gansey was concerned anything was better than the usual default of Ronan's thumping electronica, or god forbid, the murder squash song.

As the Henrietta sign approached, Gansey let out a deep breath. This was the first time he was leaving the town without the intention of returning within a few days or weeks, and unlike any of the other places he'd lived, Henrietta felt like home. Of course they would be coming back, but it would not be for several months at least.

"*Vale*," He murmured as they drove past the sign. He had a strange sense of having lived the moment before, but as he was beginning to get used to not perceiving time entirely linearly anymore, he just ignored it.

"Hey, hey, imagine Parrish's college buddies hearing that his

boyfriend is a single dad and a farmer, and then meeting Lynch," Henry interjected suddenly, "Or y'know, the other way round." Blue snorted, clearly picturing the scene in her head. Putting on a surprisingly accurate Pennsylvanian accent, Henry continued, "When you said your boyfriend was a farmer and had a kid, this isn't what I was expecting."

"I'm sure they'll all get along admirably," Gansey said lightly, but Blue laughed again and quickly called him out on it.

"You know as well as I do that's not likely." And likely it probably wasn't. He loved Ronan like a brother, but he also knew that the middle Lynch brother was not an easy person to befriend, and the sudden distance between him and the rest of them wouldn't help. At least Ronan had Opal to look after still.

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The new Camaro, the Piglet as Blue had dubbed it at Henry's suggestion, ate through the miles, and by the time they stopped a few hours later, they were well into North Carolina. Parking outside a roadside diner, Gansey, Blue and finally Henry all clambered out and stretched, before trooping inside and claiming a booth by the window. The diner appeared to be just like any other diner across the country, albeit maybe on the cleaner side of things, but lacking in any sort of distinguishing features which disappointed Gansey a little. He liked the places he visited to have character.

"Well, it's not Nino's," Gansey commented, looking at the generic food print on the wall beside them.

"Thank god," Said Blue, shooting a polite smile at the waitress who'd just started towards their table.

"They do veggie burgers," Henry informed them, inspecting the brightly coloured menu. He looked at it for a few more seconds, before pushing it towards Blue.

"Can I get you guys drinks while you look at the menu?" The waitress asked as she reached their table, giving them all a wide smile.

“How about a jug of lemonade iced tea to share?” Blue suggested, glancing between the two boys.

“Sounds good,” Henry agreed, as Gansey nodded, “Something nice and refreshing will do just the trick.”

When Henry got up and went to use the restroom a few minutes later, Blue leaned in closer and said quietly but firmly, “We need to talk about Henry before anything happens and makes the trip awkward.” She paused, as if thinking about how to word what she wanted to say, before settling on, “He looks at you like Ronan and Adam look at each other.”

“Funny,” Gansey replied slowly, “I was going to say the same thing about you.” They just looked at each other for several moments, thinking through the implications of their discovery. Then Blue tentatively suggested, “Three *is* the strongest number.” Gansey found himself nodding in agreement, despite the fact he’d never been attracted to another guy before and that he’d certainly never been in a similar situation. He’d had a strong connection with Henry since the afternoon in the basement of Borden House, and according to the universe itself, Blue was his true love, so he thought that if all parties were willing, they could make it work. Gansey had no idea how they would broach the subject to Henry however.

“Let’s discuss it properly at another point,” He suggested, eyeing the other patrons, “When we have some privacy.”

“Yeah. Sooner rather than later though,” Blue replied, unconsciously fiddling with some of the tassels on her shirt. Then they both spotted Henry returning and hurriedly started discussing places to stop off on the first leg of the trip.

If Henry noticed either of them looking at him more than normal, he didn’t mention it.

Notes for the Chapter:

Vale is Latin for farewell.

7. Beach - Alec/Magnus, The Mortal Instruments

Summary for the Chapter:

Malec family trip to the beach. Pure fluff.

Notes for the Chapter:

Set several years after Tales from the Shadowhunter Academy.

Alec had found that he felt perfectly happy and content a lot more recently. His improved relationship with his parents had definitely contributed, but he knew the majority of it was due to the small child currently burying his feet in the sand. While Max happily piled more and more sand onto Alec's feet, Alec idly flicked through a book on the history of cooperation between Warlocks and Shadowhunters. So far he knew a large amount of the content already, but he hoped that it would go into more depth after the initial chapters, or at least cover less well known events. Turning the page, accompanying the paragraph about the invention of fixed portals he found a sketch of Magnus and a man who, with a glance at the caption, he confirmed to be Henry Branwell. Alec snickered at the sight of his boyfriend in period clothing, and then laughed even more when he read the paragraph itself.

"What are you laughing at, my love?" Magnus asked, causing Alec to look up from the book and Max to squeal loudly, "Papa!" The squeal however could have been due to the ice cream Magnus had brought them.

"There's a picture of you and Henry Branwell in here," Alec replied, whilst reaching out to grab Max before he could launch himself at Magnus.

"Let daddy wipe your hands first, then you can have ice cream," Magnus told their son, smiling at the sight of his boyfriend holding Max's arm with one hand and rummaging for the wet wipes with the other.

“Okay,” Max pouted, but he stayed still long enough for his hands to be cleaned of sand, so his parents counted it as a win. Once Max was settled with his ice cream, Magnus sat down next to Alec and handed him one of the remaining cones. Alec thanked him, then flicked open his book again one-handedly and said teasingly, “Listen to this. Henry was helped in his task by Magnus Bane, a reasonably powerful warlock-”

“Reasonably powerful?!” Magnus interrupted, pulling a face that he probably didn’t realise looked to Alec like the one Max had just made.

“It gets better,” Alec chuckled, before reciting the rest of the sentence, “-a reasonably powerful warlock with an unbearably inflated sense of self importance, who dedicates far too much time and effort to his appearance.” Spluttering, Magnus pulled the book towards him and demanded, “Who wrote that? I’m going to have words with them.”

“Someone who is probably dead by now,” Alec replied, still grinning in amusement.

In that moment, laughing at his boyfriend’s petulant expression while their son had the time of his life eating (and also covering his face in) ice cream, Alec thought he wouldn’t change it for the world.

8. Fireflies - Gen with minor Keith/Lance, Voltron: Legendary Defender

Summary for the Chapter:

> The paladins find out that neither Allura or Coran have been to a camp out, and so decide to show the Alteans what they've been missing out on.

"Oh wow, alien fireflies," Hunk announced excitedly from where he was sat near the edge of the canyon. Upon finding out that neither Allura or Coran had been to a camp out, Lance and Hunk had immediately declared that they were going to show the Alteans what they'd been missing out on. Pidge and Shiro had soon gotten involved, taking charge of the music and fire respectively. Hunk had unsurprisingly sorted the food, while Lance had taken it on himself to try and get the castle to make something resembling Earth beer. Keith hadn't offered to help, but had surprised everyone by turning up with a packet of sky lanterns that no-one could work out where he'd got them from. Now they were all sat around the fire listening to Pidge's playlist, drinks in hand. At Hunk's words, everyone looked at where he was pointing and made various noises of appreciation.

"The lesser spotted star bug," Coran informed them, before adding cheerfully, "Deadly poisonous, but only if you eat them." Allura smiled, enjoying the light show the bugs were putting on, and said, "Of course there are some species that consider them a delicacy anyway."

"Like puffer fish back home," Shiro suggested. He leant back further in his chair and took a swig of Lance's actually quite successful beer replica, before gazing up at the stars above. With the castle in low light mode and no others buildings nearby, he could see stars covering every inch of the sky, although of course he didn't recognise any of the constellations seeing as they were many, many light years away from Earth.

"Why do fireflies and other bugs," Hunk began to ask, before being interrupted by Coran, "Like the lesser spotted star bug."

"Yes, exactly," Hunk agreed, before continuing, "Why do they light up like that?"

"To attract the ladies," Lance immediately joked, giving Hunk what was probably meant to be a flirtatious wink. Pidge rolled her eyes and replied, "They use bio-luminescence to attract both mates and prey. So Lance is actually right."

"Ha!" Crowed Lance, punching the air with one fist.

"For the first and last time," Keith drawled, shooting Lance a teasing grin when the blue paladin looked at him, affronted.

“I feel so betrayed,” Lance complained, “You’re my boyfriend, you’re meant to be supportive.”

“It’s also my job to keep your ego in check,” Keith retorted, grin only widening when Lance started spluttering.

“Lance, why don’t you tell us more about those ‘ghost stories’ you mentioned earlier,” Allura quickly asked, distracting him from bickering with Keith before it got out of hand. They had been known to argue for hours without stopping, and the others would rather not suffer through that again. Luckily Lance was easy to convince to tell stories, and soon they’d all moved closer to listen to him recount a ghost story that his eldest sister had used to terrorise the rest of his siblings.

“It begins with a funeral...”

9. Stargazing - Blue/Gansey/Henry, The Raven Cycle

Summary for the Chapter:

Blue and Gansey ask Herny out.

They were laid on the hood of the car stargazing when Blue lightly tapped Gansey's wrist to get his attention, and upon meeting his gaze, mouthed, "I think it's time." Immediately knowing what she was on about, as he'd spent the last few days thinking about it passively at all times, and actively a lot of the time, he reached for her hand and squeezed it. They were going to ask Henry if he wanted to join their relationship, to become a three, because they'd each noticed him staring at the other lovingly; because both felt there was a strong unbreakable connection between them all; because three was the most powerful number anyway. Gansey agreed the time was right, because out here in the middle of the desert, watching the stars and hearing nothing except their gentle breathing and the faint chirp of cicadas, it felt like a magical night. Maybe it wasn't outright magical like Cabeswater or St Mark's Eve, but there was definitely potential for magic to happen. It felt like the universe would look kindly on any life changing decisions, like what they were about to suggest.

“Henry,” Gansey said softly, not having to speak very loud at all to be heard due to the quietness of their surroundings and their proximity. He pushed away from the windscreen and sat up straight to see the other boy better over Blue, who was laid in the middle of them.

“Yeah?” Henry replied, looking away from the stars and at Gansey instead, a young man who many would say shone as brightly as a star. He didn't tend to agree with them, but they were often acquaintances of his mother’s and weren't going to say anything else. He was also aware that his friends would possibly say the same, for very different reasons, but that wasn't something he chose to dwell on as it was rather daunting. Flattering, but daunting nevertheless.

“Jane and I have a proposal for you,” He began, nerves causing him to fall back on the persona he put on for public functions and dealing with people in positions of authority.

“What he means is,” Blue interrupted, having noticed Gansey’s nerves and decided to take over before he said something that would potentially offend one or all of them, “We’ve seen the way you look at us both.” Thankfully Henry didn’t try and deny it or make a joke, perhaps sensing their seriousness. Gansey could feel Blue shaking slightly, despite her apparent confidence, and so squeezed her hand again, offering support where he could even if he didn’t know how to actually ask the question.
“We’ve talked about it, and we both like you,” Blue continued, making sure to keep Henry’s gaze to assure him they were being serious in their offer.

“A lot,” Gansey added, giving the other boy a warm smile. Henry’s expression was complicated, but Gansey thought that he could detect hope in it which was a positive sign.

“So, if you want to…” At that, Blue’s confident façade broke, probably at the thought that Henry might not want to join them, but Gansey had finally found the right words so he finished the question for her.

“Would you like to join our relationship?”

“Are you asking me out?” Henry’s growing smile was one of the most beautiful things Gansey had seen, and he supposed that was saying something, considering their current surroundings.

“Yes,” Gansey confirmed, almost at the same time as Blue said, “We want you to be our boyfriend.”

“Well okay then,” Henry replied, beaming at them both. His genuine happiness and excitement were glaringly apparent despite his casual words, and seemingly caught up in the same rush of emotions, Blue turned more towards Henry and asked all at once, “Can I kiss you?” Henry’s response was simply to lean in and kiss Blue softly, hands coming up to cup her face. At the sight, something clicked into place for Gansey, a similar feeling to the ones he’d had when each of his friends had joined him in the search for Glendower, and by doing so, cemented their friendship. Then Blue was pulling away and leaning back and saying Gansey's name, prompting him to kiss Henry too. Gansey and Henry both moved to meet in the middle, making an

archway over Blue, then their lips met and they were kissing. It was a rather different sensation to kissing Blue, but Gansey thought they complimented each other well, if such a thing were possible.The kiss was brief but no less enjoyable or important for it. All three of them sank back down to lean against the windscreen, all smiling at each other, and as they returned to watching the stars, Blue reached out and took Gansey's hand in her left and Henry's in her right, linking them all together.

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Later that night when they'd stopped at a motel, Henry sent Adam a single photo of their legs all tangled together as they cuddled. He got a text a few minutes later that just said '*finally*' followed by a string of emojis that got steadily ruder, and then shortly after, a second text followed which read '*What Ronan means to say is congratulations. We're both happy for you guys.*'

10. Sailing - Gen, Ghostbusters

Summary for the Chapter:

> There's a reported haunting on an island near the city so Holtz posts an ad on Craigslist to get them there.

“How did you get us a boat with the Ghostbusters logo on it?” Erin asked, staring at the small vessel in front of the four Ghostbusters, their logo emblazoned on the side.

“The Internet,” Holtzmann replied gleefully, clapping her hands in excitement as she got closer to it for a better look.

“I posted on Craigslist asking if anyone could take us out to the island, and when this guy got back to me, he asked if there was anything else we needed. I didn’t think he’d actually go for it!” As she finished her explanation, Holtz crouched down on the pier next to the boat and pulled out her phone, grinning manically as she took a selfie with the well maintained motorboat and its large, beautifully hand painted “No Ghosts” emblem.

“You must be the Ghostbusters. I’m Teddy Scott, nice to meet you all,” An older man called out in greeting to them as he approached from the end of the jetty. His windbreaker, boat shoes and wrap around shades made it very easy to picture him as a sailor, however the willingness to paint (or have painted) their logo on his boat was less expected.

“Yes, we are. I’m Patty Tolan,” Patty smiled, sticking out her hand to him as he got close, “This is Dr Abby Yates, Dr Erin Gilbert, and Dr Jillian Holtzmann.” Teddy shook her hand firmly as Holtz interjected, “Call me Holtzmann. Also we spoke online.”

“Nice to meet you,” Abby added, shaking his hand in turn, “She wasn’t being serious about painting our logo on your boat by the way, but I’ve got to say, it does look pretty cool.”

“It was nothing,” Teddy replied, waving off any rebuttals, “It’s the

least I could do after you saved the city."

"Well thank you for doing this for us," Erin said, before looking back at the boat and asking, "Is it ready to go?"

"Yes, she's ready to leave whenever you ladies are."

"We've just gotta load up our gear then we're good to go, right?" Abby informed Teddy, directing the last word at the rest of the group. A series of nods followed, as well as an "Aye, aye, Captain," from Holtz, who then moved to pick up one of the large boxes that contained their proton packs, ghost traps and side arms. The boxes were waterproof and sealed to protect it all from potential water damage that might occur, so the women were hoping they wouldn't be attacked as soon as they set foot on the island.

"Let me help you with that," Teddy said, hurrying to help Holtz lift the box before she attempted it by herself. While the trolleys they'd borrowed from the harbour master had got the boxes to the boat without too much trouble, they obviously couldn't help getting them on it. Abby and Patty picked up the second box between them, while Erin just stood and watched, looking out for anything that she could do to help. Once the boxes were securely loaded and tied down on the deck, the five of them crowded into the small cabin. It was a squeeze, but they all just about fit. Teddy obviously had the captain's chair, and Holtz had immediately dived for the seat next to him, so the other three were left to fit themselves in what room was left.

Soon enough they were powering through the water, heading towards the small island where a ghost had been reported to be harassing vessels that passed close by. Patty suspected it was the ghost of a captain who had been shipwrecked there in 1873, along with his crew as they returned home to New York. Dying in sight of the city couldn't have helped the spirit rest easy. If the island was being haunted, they'd soon find out.

11. Sailing - Parker/Eliot/Hardison, Leverage

Summary for the Chapter:

> Eliot wants to teach Parker and Hardison how to surf. Hardison isn't very happy about it.

“Oh, nuh-uh, I see where this is going,” Hardison announced suddenly, coming to a halt at the edge of the boardwalk. Parker thought he’d probably just spotted Eliot ahead of them on the beach. Eliot had gone on ahead of them to sort out a surprise, and now stood just above the waterline with three surfboards, a cool box and a beach umbrella.

“Come on, don’t you want to see Eliot’s surprise?” Parker asked, tugging at Hardison’s wrist to try and prompt him to start moving again.

“I can see what Eliot’s surprise is from here,” He complained, “Considering how he’s got three big ass surfboards with him.” He did however start walking again, although looking distinctly less excited than he had done a minute ago.

“Hi Eliot!” Parker cried as she launched herself at him for a hug, acting as if she hadn’t seen him for days, not just earlier that morning.

“Hey Parker,” Eliot smiled, his affection obvious in his voice. Parker reached behind her and tugged Hardison into the hug too, knowing it would make him feel better even if he kept refusing to try surfing.

“Hardison doesn’t want to go surfing,” She mumbled into Eliot’s shoulder, hoping that he would help her convince Hardison to have a go. She was sure he’d enjoy it once he learnt how to balance on the board.

“Seriously, man?” Eliot said disbelievingly, pulling away to get a better look at their boyfriend, who was beginning to look just a little uncomfortable now both of them were watching him.

“I am not made for fighting to stay upright on a bit of wood while the ocean tries to kill me,” Hardison declared, before suggesting, “I would happily, no gladly, watch you two do it as I’m sure you’ll both be amazing. I’ll guard the cooler.”

“Aww, c’mon, it’ll be fun!” Parker pouted, knowing he’d eventually cave if she gave him puppy dog eyes for long enough, especially if Eliot joined in too.

“The last time you said that, I almost died,” Hardison replied sulkily, but she could tell he was beginning to be persuaded. There wasn’t a lot he could say no to if he thought it would make her and Eliot happy, after all.

“We’re not going to let you die,” Eliot said gruffly. He then added dismissively, “Especially doing something as relatively safe as surfing.”

“...fine,” Hardison eventually muttered, still not sounding enthusiastic. Parker was sure that would soon change though, once he got out on the water. She hadn’t been surfing before either, but she was looking forward to it, seeing it as a new source of adrenaline rushes. Wondering how long it would take her to be able to ride a wave, she beamed at Hardison as Eliot clapped him on the shoulder.

“Great. Now to start with, I’ll take you out one at a time to show you the basics and to make sure you’re balancing correctly.”

***

By lunchtime, all three of them were out on their boards. Parker, surprising no-one, had taken to surfing like a fish to water, and while Hardison still wasn’t very confident, he could at least stay on the board most of the time now. Eliot *was* a very good teacher after all.

Notes for the Chapter:

> By relatively safe, Eliot's meaning in comparison to other activities they do regularly, like taking on bad guys and getting shot at.

12. Family Reunion - BAU Team, Criminal Minds

Summary for the Chapter:

> It's a rare occasion when the whole team, past and present, manages to get together.

JJ smiled to herself as she watched her found family enjoying themselves from her spot on the back porch. Henry and Jack were running around, playing some convoluted game that she was sure the rules of were changing constantly. Spencer and Emily were talking animatedly about some book to movie adaptation, with Aaron contributing occasionally and even almost smiling. Penelope and Savannah were teasing Derek, and the others were all chatting and catching up. It had been a long time since they'd all been in once place and even longer since they'd gathered just for fun.

"What are you doing over here by yourself?" Will asked as he approached her from inside the house. He wrapped his arms around her waist from behind, a chilled bottle in one hand, and leant down to press a soft kiss to her temple.

"I was just thinking how nice it is for everyone to be here," JJ replied, twisting in his embrace just enough so she could smile up at him. Will hummed in agreement and stated, "It doesn't happen very often, does it?"

"Emily being on the other side of the Atlantic doesn't help." JJ turned her gaze back to the gathering of people in their back yard, so happy for this moment together without anything hanging over them or the worry that the team would get called in. She made a mental note to thank Mateo again when she next saw him.

"Her presence will have to continue being a rare treat, but we should have the others over more," Will suggested, "Even if y'all get a case mid way through, the rest of us can still socialise and look after the kids."

"Yeah, we should," JJ agreed, "As long as we don't expect everyone to turn up, we could make it a semi-regular thing." Will grinned and

said, “It sounds like a plan. Now let’s join them before this wine goes warm.” Hand in hand, they returned to the table full of their friends, ready to make the most of the evening before they all scattered to go home (some further than others).

13. Crickets - Adam/Ronan, The Raven Cycle

Summary for the Chapter:

Opal discovers Adam's new tattoo.

“What is that?” Opal asked, still twirling around the garden while Adam and Ronan sat on the steps leading up to the back porch, watching. Adam looked around to see what she was talking about, but nothing popped out at him. There was nothing new nearby, and the only things he could hear were the murmuring noises that made up the constant soundtrack of the Barns and the quiet chirping of crickets. He glanced at Ronan to see if he could shed some light on the situation, but his boyfriend just shrugged.

“What is what?” Adam called back to Opal, seeing as Ronan didn’t seem to be in a talkative mood. The little girl finally stopped spinning and galloped towards them, skidding to a stop just in front of Adam, before jabbing her finger at his shoulder and announcing, “That!” Glancing down, he realised Opal was talking about his tattoo which was peeking out from where his t-shirt sleeve had ridden up. He’d gotten it in his previous semester at college, before he’d come home for summer break. His friends had decided it was a great idea to all get tattoos together, and while initially Adam hadn’t seen the point in it, he’d kept coming back to the idea over the next few days and had found himself doodling ideas on his coursework. He’d eventually come up with a design he was happy with – a raven wearing a crown against a backdrop of trees, the entire thing enclosed by a sketch of the ley lines, and had joined them on the excursion. Ronan had been delighted when he’d seen it, the first time they’d fallen into bed together after Adam’s return, and still kept finding excuses to look at it, to touch it.

“It’s a tattoo,” He explained, lifting her up so she could examine it better, “Like Ronan’s got on his back.”

“Kerah,” She agreed as she pushed up his sleeve, inspecting the tattoo intently, before giving it a good lick. Adam appreciated her approval, even if he didn’t particularly appreciate the sloppy way she expressed it. At least she hadn’t bitten him. She squirmed in his arms, wanting

to be put down again, but Ronan finally spoke up, “C’mon, bedtime.” Opal pouted, but he continued, “If you’re good, Adam will tell you a story.” That seemed to convince her, so when Adam put her down she darted off inside, hooves clattering across the floorboards as she disappeared deeper into the house. Ronan got to his feet and offered Adam his hand, smirking slightly as he said, “Let’s put Opal to bed and then you can tell me what Gansey’s reaction to finding out you got a tattoo was.” Adam stood up too, slipping his hand into Ronan’s and pulling him in for a quick kiss, before following Opal’s route upstairs.

Notes for the Chapter:

> This is what I was imagining Adam's tattoo to look like. But with the raven and the trees better integrated.

14. Graduation - Andrew/Isaac, PJO Next Gen

Summary for the Chapter:

Andrew's graduation day.

Notes for the Chapter:

Andrew Tanaka is Allarica's OC. Isaac Rodriguez is mine.

While Isaac's friends still teased him for dating a high schooler, here at New Rome High Andrew was the cool kid with the college age boyfriend. Especially when said musician of a boyfriend was sat on the other side of the hall with the parents, siblings and other assorted guests that had come to watch Andrew's class graduate. Isaac had dressed up for the occasion, wearing a slim fit pale grey shirt, the red tie Andrew had bought him last year, and a pair of smart black jeans. Of course, Isaac being Isaac, he was also wearing black boots, but it fit the grungy rocker look that he so easily pulled off. Once Andrew's friend Parvati had pointed Isaac out to the people surrounding them, there was quite a bit of hushed whispering, mostly boiling down to, "Omg, he's so hot!" and, "You look so cute together." There was even a, "It's the drummer from Legionnaire!" Andrew couldn't help blushing a little at the attention, but he made a mental note to tell Isaac later that he'd been recognised.

Sat next to Isaac, looking just as uncomfortable with the proximity although they were both hiding it well, was Andrew's Maman. He was so happy she'd been able to make it, because even though she'd told him she wouldn't miss it for the world, he knew she was very busy. He was still hoping that she and Isaac would be able to get along, even if they never became friends, but he supposed it was always going to take time especially considering how long his Maman could hold grudges for. The fact she didn't like Isaac's mom either didn't help the situation, and it would certainly make for awkward family gatherings if (when, Andrew hoped) they got to that point in their relationship.

Then the headteacher finished her speech and started calling out

students' names, starting with Tiffany Adams and working her way slowly through the alphabet. Andrew clapped especially loudly when his cousins, Micah and Mads crossed the stage. Finally it was his turn, and he got to his feet and made his way up onto the stage to collect his certificate and handshake. He gave a grin and a wave to his Maman and Isaac, before following Parvati off the the stage and heading back to his seat once more. Soon it was time for the throwing of the caps, and then there was mild chaos as everyone tried to find their friends and families. Andrew was lucky and found an empty row of seating that lead almost to where his Maman and Isaac were stood waiting and making small talk. Andrew ran up to them and pulled his Maman into a tight hug, beaming as she congratulated him in French. Then he turned to Isaac and hugged him too.

"Congratulations, Liebling," Isaac murmured into his ear, before pulling away and giving him a quick kiss.

"I've made dinner reservations," Andrew's Maman informed them, switching to English even though they all spoke French, "Micah, Madeline and their parents will be there, and Isaac, you're invited as well if you'd like to join us." She and Isaac may not have been on the best of terms but she was trying, for Andrew's sake.

"Yeah, that'd be great, thanks," Isaac replied, smiling politely. Andrew really needed to find some common ground between them so they could bond, but it was difficult because his Maman and Isaac were very different people. But they would get on one day, even if Andrew had to force them. He couldn't have the two most important people in his life at odds with each other or he'd never be completely happy. For today however, being civil would have to be enough. With his cousins there, the dinner would be a lot easier and a lot more enjoyable, both because it would lessen the awkwardness and because of the simple enjoyment of their company. He decided to put it out of his mind for the time being though, and to simply enjoy the rest of this special day.

"Come on, I want to introduce you to Parvati, Maman."

Notes for the Chapter:

ALL the awkward interactions between Drew and Isaac!

15. Weddings - Simon/Baz, Carry On

Summary for the Chapter:

Several years after the events of 'Carry On', Simon and Baz get married.

Things still felt a little surreal to Simon, even though it was the morning of his wedding and the run up had been a manic whirlwind of activity (although not by his choice). It was still hard to believe that he and Baz were here, about to make this commitment to each other, after everything they'd been through. He couldn't be happier about it though, and it was manifesting as an inability to keep still, something which was rather annoying Penelope, his best woman, who was trying to cast some last minute spells on him to ensure his wings and tail didn't appear during the ceremony.

“Dammit Simon, can't you stand still for one minute?” She complained, before pressing down on his shoulders with her hands in an attempt to make him do as she wanted. He grinned widely at her but managed to contain his excitement long enough for her to finish covering him in spells. The wedding, and to be honest, their entire engagement, was a weird mishmash of Normal and magick traditions but at least it hadn't involved duelling. Simon would duel someone for Baz in a heartbeat, no question about it, but he didn't see the need for it to be part of their relationship, much to Penelope's disappointment. Simon figured they'd done enough fighting during their school years to make up for it anyway. So there he was, dressed in his dark grey suit with a flower in his buttonhole (Normal) and a intricate pendant hung over his collar (magickal), about to see Baz for the first time in twenty four hours to declare their love for each other in front of the large crowd that would be gathered in the grounds of the Pitch family house for the occasion. Baz’ step mother was going to read the rites (magickal) then they would exchange their vows (Normal) and rings (both). No doubt Baz would be suave and spectacularly handsome, there would be lots of crying, and Simon would make a fool of himself, but he figured that as long as he got to go home with Baz at the end of it, he didn't really care.

“Are you ready?” Penelope asked, breaking Simon out of his

thoughts.

“As ready as I'll ever be to go and make a fool out of myself in front of Baz’ entire family and all those other people out there,” Simon replied, grinning despite his words.

“I'm sure you'll be fine,” She reassured him, although he wasn't sure how sincere she was being seeing as she knew just as well as him how much of a habit he had of sticking his foot in things, “And even if you do do something stupid, Baz won't care.”

“No, he'll just laugh at me instead,” Simon retorted. Penelope just smacked him on the shoulder and then peered round the door to the hallway to see if it was time to make their entrance. Apparently it was, so she gave him a quick last once over then pulled the door fully open.

“After you,” She grinned, her excitement just as obvious as Simon’s now the wedding was about to get underway. Priya, who'd been waiting outside for them, led the way down the hallway and out into the extensive gardens, where they followed a petal strewn path to the pavilion that had been set up specially for the day. As they entered the pavilion, Simon caught sight of Baz approaching from other side and his breath caught in his throat. He'd expected his fiancé to look amazing, but even that hadn't prepared him for the sight of Baz in a tuxedo, wearing the pendant that Simon had picked out for him. Penelope had to nudge him to get him to keep walking forward. And then Simon found himself stood in front of Baz, smiling so widely he thought his mouth would start hurting.

“You look…” Simon breathed, unable to think of a word to complete the sentence that was good enough to describe how handsome he looked, but Baz seemed to understand what he was trying to say, and responded with a grin and a joke, “Good enough to make you forget how to speak apparently.” Baz’ stepmother stepped forward and welcomed the guests, before moving on to a short speech about love and marriage, and then the rites themselves. Simon spent the entire thing just staring at Baz, barely aware of all the people watching them, so was taken by surprise a little when it went quiet and he found everyone watching the two of them expectantly. But he'd prepared his vows, recited them to himself until he knew them word

for word, so he took a deep breath and began, “Baz, I know we've had our ups and downs, but the crucible put us together back all those years ago and it obviously knew what it was doing, because look at where we are now.” There was some quiet laughter at that from the crowd, and although it hadn't been what he'd been going for, it spurred him on.

“I may not know what the future holds for us, but I know I want to spend it with you, no matter what. I can't wait to be your husband, so I'm going to keep this short.” More quiet laughter.

“I'm so happy to be marrying you. I love you.” Simon was not surprised to hear Penelope crying quietly behind him, as she'd been threatening to do so for weeks, but he was surprised by how watery Baz’ eyes were. It turned out that Simon’s words had been emotional enough that Baz had to have a couple of attempts to start his own vows without choking up. But when he did start speaking, their positions were suddenly reversed and Simon found himself welling up. He fought back the tears before they actually emerged, but he knew that Baz knew the effect his words were having on him.

"You know me better than anyone else in this world and somehow still you manage to love me. You are my best friend and one true love. There is still a part of me today that cannot believe that I'm the one who gets to marry you. Simon Snow, I love you with all my heart.” At the end, Mordelia approached, almost skipping, and held out an intricately engraved box with the two rings inside. They both reached for the box at the same time, knocked hands and snickered, before Baz caught Simon’s hand in his own and carefully picked out one ring with his other hand. He slid the ring onto Simon’s finger, smiling softly at him the entire time, and then lifted their hands so he could press a soft kiss to Simon’s knuckles.

“My turn,” Simon grinned as he reached out to take the other ring. He swapped his grip on Baz’s hand so he could slide the ring onto his finger, and then as their friends and family began to applaud, he pulled Baz into a deep kiss. For a moment, nothing else mattered. He forgot about everyone watching, and just lost himself in the feeling of Baz pressed against him and the knowledge that they were now married.

Notes for the Chapter:

The majority of Baz' vows is from this site. Simon's speech is all mine.

16. Dehydrated - Lou Ellen/Connor, PJO

Summary for the Chapter:

A simple B&E goes wrong when a pack of Empusai interrupt the middle of it.

Notes for the Chapter:

TW: blood.

“I'm so thirsty,” Lou Ellen slurred, all of her focus going on keeping the security guards away from their position with her magic. Connor was beginning to get worried about her, well he'd been worried since she got injured, but now he was getting seriously worried. She was still losing blood and given how she was funnelling all her energy into keeping them hidden, he knew that must be making her condition worse.

Breaking into the museum and stealing the old ring that Connor was after shouldn't have been difficult, which was why they hadn't come properly prepared and why they were suffering for it now. It was meant to have been a simple in and out job, Lou bending the Mist to keep the security guards unaware and Connor breaking into the case to retrieve the ring. In fact he'd just picked it up and was putting the glass back when a pack of Empusai had appeared. There'd been a moment of silence as they stared at each other, Lou and Connor surprised to see the monsters, and the Empusai seemingly surprised to see the demigods they'd tracked down stealing from a museum display. Connor had shoved the ring into his pocket and drawn his sword, as Lou had thrown a spell at the monsters. They’d all dived out of the way though and the spell had hit the wall behind where they'd been standing, setting off an alarm. There'd been a quick and dirty fight, Lou casting spells as quickly as she could recite the incantations, before resorting to her daggers as the monsters got into arms reach, while Connor kept teleporting around, trying to get behind them. They'd managed to kill all the Empusai except one by the time the museum security could be heard approaching, and Connor had just begun to think they might still get away clear when Lou had cried out. Without thinking, he’d thrown his sword at the

Empusa but luckily it had hit the target dead on. The monster had disintegrated, but Lou was already bent over and clutching her side, clearly in pain. Connor had rushed to her side, but before he had even had time to look at her wound, the security guards had stormed into the room. He had used the last of his energy to teleport them into a nearby storage closet, and blocked the door before kneeling at Lou's side and carefully pulling her shirt up to see how bad the injury was. Her shirt had already been stained red, and when he'd seen the damage, he'd sworn under his breath. Luckily Lou had had some crumbs of ambrosia in her pocket which reduced the bleeding to a sluggish pace, but she'd still need medical attention as soon as possible. That had been when the security guards started banging on the closet door, but before Connor had had chance to do anything, Lou had cast a spell to divert their attention.

That brought them to their current situation. They were still hiding in the storage closet, Lou manipulating the Mist to keep the guards away while Connor kept his hands pressed on her wound to stop the bleeding, hoping and praying to regain enough strength to teleport them out of there soon. They longer they were stuck there, the weaker Lou got, both from using her powers and from blood loss.

"You're doing great, babe. Just hang in there and I'll be able to get us out of here soon," Connor reassured her, hoping he sounded more optimistic than he felt. Lou's skin was pale and she felt clammy to the touch, both sure signs she needed a healer but Connor knew he wasn't up to teleporting them back to camp, not for certain.

"I'm just gonna have a nap," Lou murmured, eyes drooping shut as the strain of using her magic on top of the blood loss got too much for her.

"No babe, you've got to stay awake. Stay with me," Connor said hurriedly, chancing removing one hand from her side to lightly tap her cheek. She mumbled something else, but it was too quiet for him to catch. That was when the banging started up again, the guards having soon found them once more now the Mist wasn't obscuring their search. Swearing again, Connor realised it was now or never. He'd have to chance teleporting back to camp or they would be caught by the guards and Lou would definitely not get a healer in time. Uttering a quick, desperate prayer to his father, he carefully

gathered Lou up in his arms and, concentrating as hard as he could on the infirmary at Camp Half Blood, he teleported. He just had time to see he'd got them there, appearing right in front of a young Apollo kid and probably frightening the life out of her, covered in blood as they were, before he fell to his knees and passed out.

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When he woke up two days later, the first thing he saw was his brother slouched in the chair next to his bed, looking haggard. As soon as he moved, Travis shot up and pulled him into an awkward hug, tighter than was really comfortable.

"Is Lou okay?" Connor rasped into Travis' shoulder, cutting off the telling off he was sure he was about to get once Travis had seen he was okay.

"Lou's gonna be fine, she just needs rest," Travis told him, pulling away so he could look Connor in the eye, "But what were you thinking?! You could have gotten both of yourselves killed!" Connor closed his eyes, planning on just trying to avoid having to see how upset and worried his brother was, but found himself falling asleep again.

***

Needless to say, it was quite some time before they robbed another museum, and that time they were much better prepared.

17. Vacation - Erin/Holtz, Ghostbusters

Summary for the Chapter:

Erin and Holtz go on holiday to the coast.

"Are you having fun?" Holtz asked, turning to look at Erin as they walked side by side along the high street of the quaint little seaside town they were visiting. Holtz had definitely put a lot of effort into the holiday, having researched well in advance everything there was to see and do in the area, as well as memorising all sorts of interesting and obscure facts so she could tell them to Erin as they wandered around.

"Yes, it's lovely here," Erin replied with a smile. It wasn't the usual sort of thing she tended to do on holiday, more leaning towards city breaks and museums, but she was enjoying herself. Admittedly, most of that was due to Holtz, but she was having fun and that was the important bit. Her girlfriend was just as enthusiastic about the history of the area and all the quirky little things there was to see as she was about her engineering, and as usual it was pretty contagious. While visiting by herself Erin might have gotten bored pretty quickly, but with Holtz she was having the fun, relaxing vacation she'd hoped for. And she was learning lots about the local area at the same time.

“Good,” Holtz grinned, before reaching out to grab Erin's hand, “I was thinking we could go and get ice cream now. There's a shop by the front that’s been there for three generations, and also has good reviews on trip advisor.”

“Okay,” Erin smiled back, lacing her fingers with Holtz’ before starting to look out for a street that would take them down to the ocean front.

“It’s been ages since I've had home made ice cream,” she commented as Holtz led them down a narrow side street.

“How?” Holtz looked shocked, “There's a shop like two blocks from the firehouse. Me and Patty go there all the time. How have you never been?” Erin just shrugged. She knew the place Holtz was

talking about, having walked past it quite a few times when she popped to the grocery store on her way home from work, but she'd never actually ventured inside.

“That's it,” Holtz announced, “I'm taking you there when we get back. Mabel will love you, especially if you wear the tiniest bow tie. Patches probably won't, but he doesn't like anyone so you don't need to feel too offended there.” Erin assumed Mabel was the owner, and guessed Patches was a cat or maybe a dog.

“Next time we go out for lunch,” Erin agreed, as they stepped back out into the sun. The ocean was directly in front of them, stretching out as far as they could see and glinting prettily in the sunlight. With her free hand, she reached into her handbag and pulled out her phone, thumbing open the camera app before coming to a stop just before the street gave way to the beach.

“One sec, I just want to take a photo,” She said, lifting her phone and snapping a quick photo of the view. Before she could put it away again though, Holtz snatched it out of her hand, spun them around so the ocean was behind them and pressed her face up against Erin’s.

“Smile!”

The resulting photo was Erin's favourite from the holiday, and she ended up getting it printed out and framed to put on her desk. She even sent a copy to her parents, who she was slowly repairing her relationship with, and found it hung in pride of place when she next visited them.

18. Lemonade - Keith/Lance, Voltron: Legendary Defender

Summary for the Chapter:

> Lance tries to make lemonade. The result is *interesting*.

"Just because I've never had some random dish your Nana makes, doesn't mean I've been deprived of all sorts of common foods," Keith stated, rolling his eyes at Lance's behaviour. Upon finding out that Keith had never had enchiladas, the other boy had gotten it into his head that Keith had never had any of the other staples from his childhood either, and so was now attempting to get the castle to make lemonade so Keith could 'try it'. The fact that Keith had had lemonade before, possibly even in front of Lance when they were both still at the garrison seemingly wasn't enough to convince Lance that Keith hadn't been missing out.

“But if you've never had enchiladas, how can I tell? Nothing's certain anymore,” Lance replied dramatically, spinning around and leaning back against the counter as if he was about to faint.

“You could just ask,” Keith suggested, folding his arms and raising one eyebrow at his ridiculous boyfriend.

“Where would be the fun in that?” Lance said, before pushing himself upright again when the machine next to him beeped, signalling that Lance’s attempt at lemonade was ready. He grabbed a glass and held it under the tap, filling it up to the top, then gingerly took a sip. Keith watched as Lance considered the drink. He'd guess it'd didn't quite taste like lemonade, but obviously wasn't horrible as Lance hadn't spat out his mouthful.

“Here,” Lance said, thrusting the glass at Keith, “Try that and tell me what it tastes like.” Keith took the glass and eyed it suspiciously, but he wasn't about to be outdone by Lance so he carefully sipped at it. It was like nothing he’d had before, but there was definitely a hint of lemon in it. There was also banana, honey, and what he thought was the faint taste of egg.

“Like someone spilled a smoothie on their scrambled eggs,” Keith replied, firmly setting the glass down on the counter. It might not be terrible but he didn't particularly want to drink any more of it either.

“Definitely not lemonade,” He added, snickering at Lance’s disappointed pout. When Lance kept looking disappointed, Keith closed the distance between them to crowd him against the counter and suggested, “Tell you what, if we get back to Earth I'll take you to that diner near the garrison that does fresh lemonade.” Going up onto his tiptoes, Keith pressed a quick kiss to Lance’s lips, curling his fingers into the front of the other boy's shirt as he tasted the strange drink again. Instead of replying, Lance pulled him back in for another kiss, this one deeper and hotter and longer. He slid his hands under the back of Keith's jacket and pulled him closer so their bodies were flush against each other, and kept kissing him, spurred on by the soft noise Keith made. Keith kissed him back just as hungrily, the not-lemonade all but forgotten. Lance had just pushed his hands under Keith's t-shirt to touch the bare skin there when there was a noise from the doorway.

“Guys, not again!” Pidge groaned, prompting them to jump back from each other guiltily, “Seriously, what is it with you two and making out in here?” Lance and Keith looked at each other, before Lance shrugged and joked, “It's not just here, we make out everywhere. Keith can't keep his hands off me, and to be honest, who can blame him?” Keith rolled his eyes and smacked Lance’s shoulder, muttering, “Not helping.”

“You're going to scar me for life one day,” Pidge informed them resignedly, before pushing past to get a drink. She paused to eye the glass on the counter, and asked, “What's that? Do I want to know?”

“Lemonade,” Lance immediately replied at the same time as Keith said, “Not lemonade.” Pidge gave them both a look, obviously expecting an explanation, but it just caused them both to burst out laughing instead. Eventually Keith got his laughter under control, but then he caught Lance’s eye and it prompted a fresh wave of laughter. Pidge sighed, got herself a glass of water and then left them to it.

19. Fishing - Rictor/Shatterstar, X-Force

Summary for the Chapter:

Rictor takes 'Star fishing. They don't catch any fish.

“Like this,” Rictor instructed, glancing at Shatterstar to check he was watching before flicking the rod forwards towards the river and letting the line spool out. The hook and bait hit the water with a splash and disappeared from sight, and so, satisfied with the positioning of the line, Rictor set the rod down on the stand and turned towards his boyfriend.

“It seems rather simple,” Shatterstar said, still watching where the line vanished into the water.

“It is really,” Rictor replied, “You just have to make sure you don’t accidentally hook yourself.”

“And now we just wait for the fish to take the bait? How long does that normally take?” Shatterstar asked, now looking at Rictor inquisitively. Rictor shrugged, “Could be a few minutes. Could be a few hours.”

“So we just sit and wait?” Rictor nodded.

“And people enjoy it?” ‘Star looked doubtful, not one to ever spend long periods of time doing nothing. He was either training or watching TV during all waking hours, although Rictor had slowly been introducing him to new things, which was how they’d ended up driving out to the nearest river to go fishing.

“It’s mostly old men, and I think they probably use it as an excuse to just sit and read a book or sleep,” Rictor replied, grinning a little. He had something else in mind to occupy them however. Reaching into the bag of gear they’d brought with them, he pulled out an old picnic blanket and spread it on the floor by the fishing rod, then plonked himself down on it and patted the space next to him, smiling up at Shatterstar. The other teen did as directed, about to ask something when he obviously cottoned on to Ric’s idea.

“Oh, I see. You want to ‘make out’ because there’s no-one else around,” Shatterstar stated, making Rictor blush with his bluntness and the way he said ‘make out’. Rictor didn’t let his embarrassment stop him though, and leant towards ‘Star so he could press their lips together. ‘Star kissed back enthusiastically, and it wasn’t long before they ended up lying down on the blanket, Ric straddling ‘Star’s hips. He left a trail of kisses along ‘Star’s jaw and down his neck, letting out a quiet moan when the other teen craned his neck up so he could bite down on the juncture between Ric’s neck and shoulder. They continued like that for the next hour or so, until they were both red lipped and Ric was breathing heavily. Shatterstar never seemed to get out of breath, which Rictor thought was unfair, but he did have to admit it was a good thing when they were kissing.

“We should go fishing more often,” He grinned, turning his head to catch ‘Star’s eye. Belatedly he realised that he had no idea whether anything had gone for their bait, but decided he didn’t really care either way. Making out with ‘Star was much better than catching fish.

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“I thought you said you were going fishing?” Terry asked when they got back to base empty handed.

“We did. Nothing was biting though,” Rictor lied, tugging at his bandana to make sure the hickies ‘Star had given him were hidden.

“Ah, well better luck next time,” She smiled, accepting his excuse. Rictor fled the room before she could ask any more questions, and hoped he hadn’t just made himself look guilty in the process.

20. Sandcastles - David/Tommy, Young Avengers

Summary for the Chapter:

> David and Tommy build a sandcastle and confess their feelings for each other.

“Let’s build a sandcastle,” Tommy announced, appearing in a spray of sand which hit David, but somehow managed to completely miss Kate who was sunbathing next to him. David looked up at Tommy and gave him an unimpressed look, before attempting to brush the sand off himself and his bag, which luckily had been closed otherwise he’d have sand on his food and clean clothes too.

“Nuh-uh, count me out,” Kate immediately said, lowering her sunglasses just enough to look at Tommy over the top of them, “I’m refing the match.” She gestured at the rough court that had been marked out in the sand where Billy and Teddy were playing volleyball against America and Noh. David knew that it was just an excuse – their friends weren’t exactly sticking to the rules anyway, but he also knew that Kate was using it as an excuse to watch America, so he didn't say anything. If she wasn’t ready to admit her feelings, then what right did he have to get involved? With a sigh, he pushed himself up and clambered to his feet, but when he noticed Tommy’s happy grin at getting company he suddenly felt a lot more amiable to the idea. And that was the other thing, he couldn't judge Kate for not acting on her crush when he was in the exact same position.

“Alright, what are you thinking?” He asked, scouring the nearby area for a good place to build their castle. His question could have been a bit more specific but Tommy immediately knew what he meant, and started describing his ideas for a very detailed, potentially impossible castle. If anyone could do it though, it would be the two of them. With Tommy’s speed and David’s brain, they could accomplish a lot. Finding a space where the sand was just the right consistency to build with, David came to a stop and knelt down, visualising the castle and the process they’d have to follow to build it.

“So what first?” Tommy asked, dropping to his knees next to him,

“I’m guessing lots of sand?”

“Lots of sand,” David agreed, before going on to explain his plan, “I think the best way would be to make a big compact pile for the central building, then we can work on shaping it, before moving on to the other towers and walls.” Very soon there was a large pile of sand in front of him and a large hole off to one side, so he leant forwards and started patting it down, compressing the sand as much as he could without just pushing the pile over.

“You do that side and I’ll do this one?” He suggested when they were ready to start shaping the small hill.

“Sure,” Tommy replied with a smile, instantly beginning to flatten the sides to make it more cylindrical. It wasn’t long before he started up an unrelated conversation though, announcing, “Billy says you’ve got a crush on someone.” It startled David enough that he accidentally poked a hole in the side of their project, and hastened to cover his response up by making the hole into a window. Tommy’s widening grin let him know that the other boy had seen his reaction though, so he gave up and said steadily, “Whether or not that’s true, it’s none of Billy’s business.” He supposed that wasn't entirely true, as their teammate had quite a right to be interested if David was going to make a move on his twin, but admitting that would make it very obvious who David liked, and he wasn’t quite ready to do that yet.

“I know who it is,” Tommy continued, his words and his devious expression making David’s stomach clench.

“Oh?” David knew from experience that getting Tommy to drop something was rather difficult, so decided to just act very noncommittally. He tried to project vague disinterest but couldn't stop himself glancing at Tommy. He often found himself watching Tommy, but he’d resigned himself to that a while ago. The speedster never seemed to notice so he figured his secret was safe, at least for now. He was expecting Tommy to name one of their teammates, or possibly someone like Noriko, so he was a little taken off guard when Tommy said with a smirk, “Captain America. Sam Wilson. I’ve seen the way you look at Billy’s posters when you think no-one’s looking.”

“I don't fancy Sam Wilson!” David protested, although he was glad

that the conversation was taking a less serious route, “I just admire him.”

“And his ass,” Tommy snickered, all the while continuing to shape the pile of sand that was slowly beginning to look like a castle. David didn’t bother to deign that with a response, knowing that no matter what he said it wouldn’t convince Tommy otherwise. He returned to the task at hand, but when a few minutes passed in silence he looked up again. Tommy was rarely quiet. The other boy was looking at the sandcastle very intently, as if trying to come to a decision, but must have felt David’s gaze on him because he suddenly flicked his eyes up to make eye contact. They just looked at each other for a long, quiet moment, before Tommy blurted out, obviously having to make an effort to speak slow enough for David to understand him, “Can I kiss you?” Taken by surprise, David’s response was a very intelligent, “What?” He hadn't actually considered the possibility that Tommy might like him back. Sure, the other boy was always friendly and liked hanging out with him, but wasn't he like that with everyone? Tommy must have misread his reaction though as he hurriedly explained, “Billy didn’t tell me it was me you have a crush on, well he sort of did but not to start with. I’ve seen you watching me, and I kinda figured you liked me but I didn't know how to act on it so I asked Billy for advice and let me tell you, that’s not something he’s ever going to let me forget, even if it was good advice.”It took David a second to process all of what Tommy had just said, and what he’d meant, and all the unsaid things that could be read between the lines, but it was enough to convince him that Tommy was actually serious about it. He edged sideways so they weren't on opposite sides of the sandcastle, then leaned forwards and pulled Tommy in for a kiss. It was soft and gentle for just a moment, but then Tommy started kissing back and it got more heated. David settled his hands on the other boy’s hips and suddenly Tommy’s arms were looped around David’s neck, pulling him closer. They kept kissing, revelling in this unexpected (at least to David) turn of events and enjoying each other’s touch until they were interrupted by a wolf whistle that was piercing enough that it could only be from America, and an exuberant cheer of “Go Tommy!” from his twin. Tommy pulled away just enough to flip them off, before tugging David back in for another kiss.

If this was the end result, then building sandcastles might just be David's new favourite thing.

21. Tanning - Team Templar, Shadow of the Templar

Summary for the Chapter:

Nate shows Simon Snapchat.

“Shadow and Springheel are at the beach,” Simon complained as he flopped down into one of the chairs around the main table, using their code names out of habit due to being at work, despite the distinctly non-work related topic of conversation.

“I know, it sucks. She wouldn't let me go with them,” Mike said sadly, slouching down in his chair and pulling a face to really add to the ‘pathetic puppy dog’ look he had going on.

“That’s because you have to work,” Simon retorted, “Just because her team got time off, doesn’t mean we do. And if I have to come in, you lot certainly do.”

“It looks really nice too,” Nate added, a little regretfully, as he wheeled his chair over to the table to join the others. Simon shot him a suspicious glance and despite looking like he thought he would regret his question, asked, “Are you…?” He trailed off and made a gesture that was clearly meant to symbolise something vaguely computery.

“I’ve seen his snapchats,” Nate explained, waving his phone at Simon who continued looking at him suspiciously.

“Is that some geeky shit?” Simon queried after a moment, scowling when Nate started snickering.

“Oh man, you don’t know what snapchat is? Even Texas has snapchat!” He asked disbelievingly, already tapping at his phone to do, well, something. Johnny nodded, confirming he did in fact have snapchat, but didn’t elaborate further which didn’t exactly help Simon figure out what it actually was.

“It’s an app where you send people photos but they can only look at them for a limited amount of time,” Nate explained, showing Simon

his phone screen which to him just looked like it was on the camera function.

“Hey Texas, send me something,” Nate said, glancing over at their fellow team member before turning back to Simon. Johnny didn’t reply, but did pull out his beat up phone and unlock it.

“Yeah, *Texas*. Why don’t you send him something?” Mike smirked, waggling his eyebrows in case his tone of voice wasn’t enough to convey his meaning. Nate went red, but Johnny just flipped Mike off and continued tapping at his phone.

“What’s the point of it?” Simon asked, giving into the fact that yet again he was out of touch with technology.

“It’s fun,” Nate shrugged, taking a picture of Simon’s coffee mug, “You can add filters too.” He swiped the photo several times, making the speed he was going appear, then the time, then the temperature, and finally a frame that consisted of little hand drawn pictures of the main local monuments with ‘Washington DC’ plastered across the bottom of the screen. Apparently satisfied, Nate tapped the screen again and a keyboard appeared, and as Simon watched, quickly typed out a short message ‘teaching Templar about snapchat’, then sent the photo to a contact named ‘J Knight’.

“…did you just send a photo of my coffee mug to Shadow?” Simon guessed that’s who the picture had gone to, between the ‘J’ and the knight > night > shadow connection. Nate nodded and grinned, “I nicknamed him that because night’s kinda like shadow and also y’know, Knights Templar.”

“It’s like the nerdy way of calling him Mrs Simon Drake,” Mike joked, pushing himself backwards to balance on two legs of his chair. Without even looking, Johnny automatically kicked out at the closest leg, attempting to make Mike over balance.

“Oh look, I’ve got Texas’ snap,” Nate announced, drawing Simon’s attention back to his phone. As he watched, Nate tapped where the screen was now showing a list of names with ‘Johnny’ in bold at the top. It switched to a side on photo of Mike, who was clearly unaware that he was being photographed, with a cartoon flower crown stuck

on his head. Simon burst out laughing.

“Okay, now I understand the point of it.”

Notes for the Chapter:

> This is set some time after the books when Sandy has her own team, and her and Jeremy spent time together doing fun stuff the other guys don't appreciate (like going to the beach and working on their tans). I already have an idea for her replacement, but that would a longer, more serious fic than this one.

22. Sunscreen - Tommy/David, Young Avengers

Summary for the Chapter:

> Tommy needs help putting sunscreen on his back. David's only too happy to oblige.

“David,” Tommy said in a voice that could only be described as wheedling, “Come help me. It’s your duty as my boyfriend to put sunscreen on my back.”

“I thought you’d be ‘too cool’ for sunscreen,” David replied, making air quotes with his fingers. However he did put down his book and stand up, crossing the small space that was the main living quarters of Tommy’s apartment to where his boyfriend was stood in the bathroom, sunscreen bottle in hand.

“Dude, have you seen me? I’m so pale my hair is white. If I spent the day in the sun without sunscreen I’d be as red as Billy’s cape by the end of it.” Tommy handed David the sunscreen and then turned his back to him. David allowed himself a moment to just watch the movement of Tommy’s muscles as he ran a hand through his hair, before stepping closer and spraying some sunscreen onto the middle of his boyfriend’s back.

“Where have you done so far?” He asked as he started to rub in the sunscreen.

“My shoulders and the back of my neck,” Tommy replied, catching David’s eye in the mirror and smiling his thanks. David slowly worked his way down Tommy’s back, making sure to cover every inch of skin with sunscreen, until he reached the waistband of Tommy’s shorts.

“There,” He murmured as he pressed up against Tommy to reach past him and set the bottle on the edge of the sink.

“My hero,” Tommy grinned as he spun around in the small space between David and the sink. Then before David could blink, he reached up, wrapped his arms around the back of David’s neck and

pulled him in for a kiss. David's hands came to rest on Tommy's waist, and he lost himself in the kiss, his world narrowing to the feel of Tommy pressed against him and the strong smell of sunscreen. Sure, it wasn't as nice as Tommy's usual smell but at least it wasn't unpleasant.

They kept kissing until they were interrupted by a knocking at the apartment door, signalling that the others had arrived. David reluctantly pulled away, but as soon as they were no longer touching Tommy vanished, leaving David stood in the bathroom by himself. The noises now coming from the small bedroom told him where Tommy had run off to, so he went to open the door to let their friends in. He'd no sooner got the door open and said hello when Tommy appeared next to him, now wearing shoes and a tank top.

"Hey losers, are you ready to go to the park?"

23. Parade - Gen, Young Avengers

Summary for the Chapter:

The Young Avengers get invited to Pride.

“I can't believe it,” Kate announced as she sat down at the table where the rest of the team had been waiting for her, “Well, I can believe it but, that’s not the point.”

“What happened?” Teddy asked, tone mostly curious as judging that by her tone and attitude nothing bad had happened.

“We’ve been invited to take part in the parade for Pride,” She replied, slouching down in her seat a little to better survey her teammates’ reactions. Billy and Teddy were definitely the most excited at the prospect, but no-one seemed to be against the idea so that was a good thing. Although considering that as far as she knew she’d been the last person to realise they were LGBT, she supposed there wasn’t ever likely to have been an issue.

“Well we don’t exactly hide the fact that our team is entirely LGBT,” America commented, looking a little amused. Then there was a sudden draft as Tommy disappeared and reappeared, throwing a handful of pin badges down on the table as he dropped back into his chair next to David.

“You can buy these in Greenwich Village, and as far I can tell they're all accurate,” He said, “So it’s not surprising really.” He reached forward to flick one of the badges at Billy, grinning when it hit him in the chest.

“Here little bro, see if they meet your approval.” There was one for each of them, bearing a small hand drawn portrait of them in costume on a background of the pride flag that corresponded to their sexuality.

“We can almost make a rainbow with our costumes too,” Teddy commented, examining the badges with a slight grin.

“I wonder if we could recruit someone with an orange uniform,” Noh mused, “Tigra? The Human Torch?”

“You’re going to tell them we’ll do it then?” David asked, although the answer was already pretty obvious, “I’m guessing no-one has any objections?” He glanced around the table to confirm his assumption before returning his gaze back to Kate. As she nodded in response, Tommy snickered and raised his mug as if making a toast, “To the Young Avengers, the gayest superhero team in New York.”

24. Pool - Pre Amy/Rosa, Brooklyn Nine-Nine

Summary for the Chapter:

> Amy and Rosa chase a suspect into a pool. Rosa is badass as always and Amy has a crush.

When the guy they were chasing dived into the outdoor pool of the apartment complex, Rosa swore. Amy wasn't sure what the guy was planning on doing, seeing as they'd just be able to grab him when he climbed out, even if would go against her instincts to run around the edge of the pool, although they could be in for a wait if he just decided to stop in the middle. While Amy was considering the best course of action, Rosa had obviously made a decision and quickly pulled off her jacket and boots, leaving them in a pile by the edge of the pool, then pulled her gun out of its holster and thrust it (safely) at Amy.

"Here," She said, irritation at the situation evident in her voice, "Make sure you get him if he decides to climb out." Amy took the pistol, double checking the safety was on and putting it in her jacket pocket for safe keeping, then Rosa spun on her heel and dived into the pool after the perp. Despite having seen Rosa perform a variety of totally badass stunts both at the station and while chasing a suspect, Amy's breath caught in her throat. She couldn't help it, Rosa gave off the impression of being so amazing and capable that Amy was often torn between wanting to be her and wanting to be *with* her. It was happening more and more often recently, and on several occasions it had resulted in moments like this one where she found herself just staring at the scene in front of her, Rosa powering through the pool after the perp and making short work of closing the distance between them. As soon as she was close enough to touch him, Rosa reached out and grabbed the guy's collar, wrestling him towards the edge of the pool so she could properly arrest him. Rosa shouting at him to stop struggling snapped Amy out of her trance, and she hurried around the edge of the pool to help Rosa drag him out. Between them, they managed to get him face down on the poolside and cuffed, then while Rosa boosted herself out of the pool, Amy read the man his Miranda rights. Apparently she wasn't fully over her awe

though, because as Rosa yanked the guy to his feet, she looked at Amy and stated, “You’re staring.”

“Sorry.” Amy flushed, and unable to stop herself, started a rambling explanation, “It’s just that that was pretty awesome what you did, not that you’re not normally awesome of course, but I wish I could be that-”

“Awesome?” Rosa interrupted drily, a faint hint of amusement in her expression which was good because it meant she wasn’t angry. Not at Amy at least.

“Oh man, you’ve got it bad,” The perp commented, making Amy just blush even more. Rosa’s growl made him shut up, but then Amy realised she hadn’t denied that she had a crush on Rosa and, panicking a little, belatedly lied, “I don’t *have it bad*.”

“Santiago, chill,” Rosa said before Amy could start rambling again, giving the guy a light shove to get him walking back towards the car. So Amy shut up and followed them, taking the perp by the arm when they reached the end of the pool so Rosa could retrieve her jacket and slip her boots back on. In fact she stayed quiet while putting the perp in the car, throughout the whole drive back to the station, and while handing him over to another officer to be processed. She stayed quiet right up to the point where she sat down at her desk and Jake grinned, “You look rumpled.” Then she almost shouted, “I don’t have a crush on Rosa!” There was a beat of silence where everyone in earshot turned to look at her and she immediately realised her mistake, then Jake started laughing at her, Gina started sidling over to them to find out the gossip, and most of the others went back to what they were doing.

No-one noticed Rosa hidden behind her computer, smiling to herself.

25. Pool floaties - Gen, The Raven Cycle

Summary for the Chapter:

> Blue and Ronan watch the others have fun in the pool.

“Aren’t you worried she’ll bite the rubber ring and deflate it?” Blue asked as she watched Opal happily hanging onto the inflatable donut and kicking her hooves. The little girl was floating in the middle of the pool, going nowhere fast as hooves obviously weren’t designed for swimming, but she didn’t seem to care, clearly enjoying herself just splashing around and occasionally splashing Adam who was floating nearby just in case. He had his feet on the floor but as it was fairly shallow, he’d bent his knees so the water came up to his shoulders.

“Nah,” Ronan replied, glancing away from his daughter and boyfriend to look at Blue where she was laid on another of the sun loungers next to him, “I dreamt it especially. She’s more likely to get bored and slide out the bottom.” Blue thought he was being rather calm about the possibility, but she supposed that he knew that Adam wouldn’t let anything happen to Opal. Then she thought how lucky the little girl was with her found family. One dad who would dream her the world (Ronan), and the other who would do anything for her despite having had parenthood sprung on him (Adam). Then of course there were the awesome aunt and uncles (her, Gansey and Henry), and the women at 300 Fox Way who all adored her.

“You not going to join their stupid competition, maggot?” Ronan asked, referring to the race that Gansey and Henry were currently discussing, hashing out how many laps and what strokes etc that it would entail.

“No, Henry’s crazy to think he can beat Gansey,” Blue declared, “There was one time during our trip that we decided to have a race in the hotel pool but because Gansey apparently used to spend like half his life swimming he won by miles. After that he wasn’t allowed to compete.” She took a sip of her drink before smirking at Ronan and adding, “Besides, isn’t it more fun to sit and watch?”

“Fuck off,” Was Ronan’s response, but the lack of bite in his tone told Blue that he agreed with her. Not that she needed telling, seeing as it was obvious just from the affectionate expression on Ronan’s face as he watched Adam and Opal. Blue herself was enjoying watching her two boyfriends as they prepared to start their race, especially when Henry decided to give himself an advantage by pushing Gansey into the pool before diving in himself. Blue burst out laughing as Ronan snickered and Opal giggled, no-one at all worried about Gansey as he was by far the strongest swimmer out of the lot of them. Henry had done half a length by the time Gansey recovered and pushed off from the wall, but it was obvious that Gansey would catch up within the next length or two anyway.

“The loser has to kiss the winner!” Blue called out as Gansey drew even with Henry. She wasn’t sure whether they both heard her, but Henry chose that moment to stop swimming and tackle Gansey, apparently deciding that the best way to stop the other boy winning was to cling onto him like a limpet. The race soon descended into splashing and attempts to duck each other under the water, and Blue found herself filled with a fierce happiness at the fact that Gansey especially was able to just let go and have fun for once.

“Excelsior,” She murmured under her breath, hoping fervently that they’d always be able to have moments like this.

26. Power outage - Cougar/Jensen, The Losers

Summary for the Chapter:

> The power goes out in Jensen and Cougar's apartment.

Cougar was having a much needed nap when he was startled awake by a shout from the other room of, “Goddammit!” He tensed as he woke up, already going for the gun in the bedside table by reflex, but before his hand even reached the drawer handle his brain had processed Jensen’s tone of voice, the other man sounding irritated rather than panicked. He relaxed back into the bed, planning on going back to sleep, but now he was awake he noticed the lack of the background noise from the various machines and appliances in the apartment that was always present. A power outage then. That must be why Jensen was swearing. And now he was aware of it, he could already notice the temperature slowly rising without the aircon keeping the apartment at comfortable level. Reluctantly he sat up, pulling his hair out of its ponytail and running his hands through it before tying it back again. He swung his legs off the side of the bed and stood up, stretching to get the kinks out of his body, and then softly (but purposefully not silently) padded out of the bedroom into the main living area where Jensen was now muttering at his lifeless computer.

“Hey Cougs.” When the other man looked up at him, Cougar gave him an unimpressed look, expressing his displeasure at being woken up. It didn’t have much of an effect on Jensen though, who kept poking fruitlessly at his computer as he asked, “Good nap?” Cougar kept looking at him balefully and retorted, “Too short.” Jensen belatedly seemed to realise he’d woken Cougar up and looked slightly guilty for a brief second before he returned to looking miserable.

“The power’s gone out so my computer doesn’t work, and my tablet needs charging and my laptop’s at work, ” He explained, as if it wasn’t already obvious by the lack of aircon and unusual quietness of the apartment. Cougar was fairly sure that Jensen hadn’t been working on anything important so just shrugged and headed towards the small kitchenette to get a glass of water.

“What am I meant to do?” Jensen whined, trailing after Cougar and doing a very good impression of a lost puppy. Cougar rolled his eyes as he filled his glass from the jug in the fridge, glanced over the contents of the fridge to see what would need throwing out if the power outage lasted for a while, and then finally turned towards Jensen and suggested, “Book?”

“Why would you even think that’s an acceptable alternative?” Jensen asked, sounding shocked and looking horrified that Cougar would even suggest it, but Cougar knew that the reaction was rather over exaggerated – Jensen did read fairly often, and in fact was halfway through reading Game of Thrones. Cougar just raised one eyebrow at him, calling him out on his ridiculousness.

“Okay fine. I don’t wanna read a book because reading makes me sleepy. That’s why I only read before bed,” Jensen admitted, “I need something more energetic to do.” At his last words, Cougar smirked, caught Jensen’s eye and then glanced purposefully towards the bedroom. Jensen followed his gaze, looking blank for a brief moment, before giving Cougar a slowly widening grin.

“Now that’s more like it.” Cougar downed his glass of water in one gulp and set the glass in the sink, before crowding Jensen against the counter and pulling him in for a hungry kiss.

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Cougar’s idea kept them busy for long enough that they barely even noticed when the power came back on.

27. Baseball - Eliot/Parker/Hardison, Leverage

Summary for the Chapter:

> 'Roy Chappell' gets recognised whenever the crew go to Massachusetts.

Whenever they're in Massachusetts now, Eliot gets recognised. Even in some small town no-one's ever heard of, there always seems to be at least one person who recognises 'Roy Chappell' despite him not even playing for the Palmerston Beavers for a full season.

The first time it happened, only Eliot's finely honed reflexes prevented him from giving the poor unsuspecting mother of two the fright of her life. He'd been sat in a coffee shop, surveilling the travel agent across the street in preparation for a con, when all of a sudden he heard a gasp and then someone rapidly approaching him. Instincts telling him that he was about to be attacked, he'd stood up and had been about to throw his arm up to block the blow he thought was incoming when the woman asked in a slightly awed tone, "You're Roy Chappell, aren't you?" Several responses had flashed through Eliot's mind, but he'd decided the one least likely to cause a commotion was to just go along with it.

"Uh, yeah," He'd replied, giving her a small smile and ignoring Hardison's snickering in his ear. The woman had beamed at him and continued, "I thought so. It's a shame you didn't stick with the Beavers, you were great. Do you mind if I get a photo?" Eliot had paused for a split second, but then nodded and smiled awkwardly at her phone as she took a selfie of the two of them. Hardison would always be able to work his magic and destroy all evidence of the photo if it came to it. She'd then thanked him and left him to his surveillance, and he'd made a mental note to make sure he was less recognisable for the rest of the job.

Hardison still teases him about it, but now he and Parker make a game out of it, making bets on how long they think it will take 'Roy' to be recognised. Eliot pretends to be annoyed by it, but secretly he enjoys being recognised for something good for a change, and the enjoyment the other two get out of the whole situation fills him with

warm affection. Sure, sometimes it makes a job more complicated, but they've learnt to work around it and it has even come in handy once or twice, including the memorable occasion when Parker almost caused a mini stampede in a sporting goods store by announcing Roy Chappell was there (the resulting commotion gave Parker and Hardison plenty of time to snoop through the business' files).

So when Parker calls her two boys into the office to brief them on their next job and starts by grinning at Eliot and saying, "We're heading to Roy's neck of the woods," he groans, acting like the whole thing is one big hassle.

The other two aren't deceived, even though they play along. No-one else knows Eliot better, after all.

28. Heat - Tommy & Billy, Young Avengers

Summary for the Chapter:

> Summer heat doesn't help when you've got to save New York from bad guys once again.

“Why can’t bad guys wait until fall to try and invade the city or whatever?” Billy complained as he shot a lightning blast at yet another formless blob that was trying to devour someone’s car.

“Oh yeah, why don’t the people trying to *take over New York* think about people’s convenience?” Tommy shot back, giving Billy a brief glimpse of a grin before he darted off again to vibrate a couple more of the blobs into gooey splatters.

“Oh shush,” Billy retorted, knowing that Tommy would still be able to hear him over their comms even if he was no longer in direct earshot, “I’m just saying, it’s far too hot for this.”

“At least you’re not running around,” Tommy said as he reappeared in front of his twin, looking not quite as unaffected as he usually appeared. He flopped down on the sidewalk, taking advantage of the fact there were currently no blobs in sight to snatch a quick rest. Billy sat down next to him, feeling just as warm as Tommy looked, and muttered under his breath, summoning a couple of cold bottles of water and a cereal bar from the kitchen at home. He offered Tommy the cereal bar and one of the waters, then uncapped his own bottle and took a long drink.

“Thanks, little bro,” Tommy said after he’d downed half the bottle of water, “Man, I hope the others are close to stopping the source of this ...invasion. I thought they must be duplicating themselves for a bit because there were so many of them.”

“I seriously hope not,” Billy stated fervently, “It took us long enough just to clear this block. At least they haven’t been targeting people.”

“So far,” Tommy replied darkly, “I’m totally expecting that when the rest of the team corners whoever’s behind this, they make the blobs

turn on bystanders in an attempt to distract the team and escape."

"And that's why we're out here melting so we can get rid of them before that happens." Billy took another sip of water and then turned to grin at Tommy, "Your boyfriend's pretty clever." Ever since he'd found out about Tommy's crush on David, he'd made it his mission to tease his twin about it whenever it was just the two of them. He hadn't told the others because he didn't want to actually upset Tommy, but the teasing was definitely worth it, even when it resulted in Tommy hitting him. And sure enough, there was the lightning fast punch to his shoulder that he'd been half expecting.

"I hate you," Tommy said, scowling, but the lack of bite to his voice told a different story. Billy opened his mouth to say something else, when a sudden scream interrupted him. He caught Tommy's eye and they both darted to their feet, threw the bottles and the wrapper in a nearby trashcan, and sped off in the direction of the scream. It was time to go back to work.

29. Popsicle - Lance/Keith, Voltron: Legendary Defender

Summary for the Chapter:

Keith eats an ice lolly. Lance gets flustered.

Notes for the Chapter:

i'm so sorry

Keith was eating an ice lolly. He was eating an ice lolly and was apparently completely unaware of the images Lance's brain was providing him with. It was all Lance could do to not just openly stare at him, and he was barely managing to finish eating his own choc ice. He was sure he was probably blushing too, but luckily the others were all too involved in the planning of their next mission to pay attention to how distracted Lance was.

Then Keith looked up and noticed Lance not quite staring at him, and Lance was sure he was busted but instead of getting angry, Keith looked blank for a moment and then smirked. He smirked and, gazing straight at Lance, licked a long, slow stripe up the side of the ice lolly. How was Lance meant to handle that?

How he ended up handling it was by darting to his feet and rushing from the room, muttering some excuse about repairs to Blue he'd just remembered he needed to do. *Smooth, Lance, smooth.* But who could blame him, really? Keith- *Keith, angry and socially awkward, Keith*- had just been blatantly flirting with him, or at least sending him a very obvious sexual innuendo, and honestly, the guy was pretty damn attractive, especially when he wasn't actively yelling at Lance. When he was a safe distance away, he slowed to a stop and leant against the wall of the hallway, banging his head lightly against the wall behind him. And then suddenly Keith was talking, from right next to him, and how had Lance not heard him approach?

"If I'd known that was all it took to get a reaction from you, I'd have done it much sooner," Keith said drily, clearly amused at Lance's flight.

“Who are you and what have you done with Keith?” Lance blurted out, knowing that he was staring but unable to stop himself. It wasn’t that he thought Keith was never forward or flirty, but he never saw this side of the other paladin, other than a vague memory from before Keith was kicked out of the garrison.

“Oh shut up,” Keith retorted, blushing a little. Which was adorable. He started turning as if to go, courage apparently faltering, but Lance reached out and grabbed his arm, anchoring him in place. Then in a move that was potentially suicidal given Keith’s ‘hit first, ask questions later’ attitude, Lance pulled Keith towards him and kissed him, before he could put too much thought into it.

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Much later, when they tell people how they got together, Lance likes making up outlandish stories about Keith confessing his undying love for him in more and more ridiculous and embarrassing ways. He certainly doesn’t tell them that it was because Lance got all hot and bothered by Keith eating an ice lolly.

30. Bugs - Nancy/Jonathan/Steve, Stranger Things

Summary for the Chapter:

> Jonathan finds a bug in his locker.

Notes for the Chapter:

> Not the intended type of bug, but whatever. It was either this or a giant, monstrous demi-bug. XD

“Jonathan found a bug in his locker,” Nancy hissed, looking a bit freaked out as she hurried up to Steve where he was leant against the wall waiting for his next class.

“What? And he can’t deal with it himself? You’d have thought after everything that happened a bug would be nothing,” Steve replied with a chuckle, but pushed himself off the wall ready to follow. He was planning on laughing at the other boy for being squeamish about an insect rather than actually helping, but he didn’t really see what the issue was. Surely there must be worse things crawling around the dark corners of the school than bugs. Nancy just rolled her eyes and said, “Not that sort of bug.” She reached out for his hand and tugged him along the corridor and around the corner to where Jonathan had his locker, walking so quickly that Steve had to make an effort to keep up with her. They pushed past a group of freshmen blocking the corridor and then could see Jonathan glaring at his locker, looking just as tightly wound as Nancy did, at least to Steve’s knowing eye. Steve bit back the joke that immediately came to mind, and stood next to the other boy to see what he was scowling at so intently, their arms just about touching. Sure enough, there was a small disc with a couple of wires sticking out of it, and while Steve wouldn’t have known what it was, he trusted the other two to know what they were talking about. Jonathan finally turned his back on his locker and said casually, “I’ve got to get to class,” while at the same time lifting his hands in an exaggerated motion that said ‘what do we do?’ Steve immediately swung an imaginary baseball bat, miming smashing the bug, but Nancy shook her head and held out her hand. Steve reached over Jonathon’s shoulder and gingerly picked up the bug, placing it carefully in Nancy’s hand, and then trailed after her as she headed off

down the corridor. Behind him he heard Jonathon slam his locker shut and follow, both of them clearly curious to find out what her plan was. She didn't go far, just far enough from Jonathan's locker that they were no longer in earshot, and after glancing around to check no-one was watching, she picked a random locker without a lock and pulled it open. Reaching up inside, she carefully put the bug on the lip above the door where presumably it had been in Jonathan's locker, and then closed the locker again.

"That's smart," Steve told her approvingly, finally understanding what she was thinking. Nancy quickly put a finger to her lips before dragging them both back down the corridor, away from the newly replanted bug. She was doing a lot of that today. He didn't really mind though – the boys both naturally looked to Nancy for leadership and he'd never complain about her touching him.

"Now whoever planted it hopefully won't realise we found it," She said once they were a safe distance away.

"I'm guessing it was the lab. I dunno who else it would be," Jonathan offered, glancing back in the direction they'd just come from.

"I thought all that was over?" Steve asked, jamming his hands in his jacket pockets to disguise the unease he felt at the thought of one of those monsters being loose again. Nancy shrugged and replied, "Maybe it's been there since we all started poking around." Her expression was at odds with her words however, showing she was just as nervous as he was at the idea that it *wasn't* all over.

"We should check our lockers too," She then suggested, glancing at her watch, "Although it'll have to wait til lunch."

"It might answer how long the bug's been there for," Steve said thoughtfully, "There's no reason for them to have been listening to me before, right? So if there *is* one in my locker, then they've probably been put there recently." Nancy gave him a tight lipped smile and nodded.

"Should we tell Hopper?" Jonathan asked, but before either of the others could answer, the bell went.

“Meet at my locker at the start of lunch, yeah?” Nancy said, before giving them both a peck on the cheek and darting off. Steve reached out and punched Jonathan lightly on the shoulder, saying, “See you later.” He watched the other boy traipse off in the other direction, and then he headed back to his own class, resigning himself to being shouted at for being late even though he’d been at the classroom five minutes early.